

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-13

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OMB-01 NIC-01 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 L-03 NSC-10 PA-04

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INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USUN NEW YORK 3399

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 362

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG IS US UR

SUBJECT: TASS OFFICIAL'S REMARKS ON DISENGAGEMENT,
US/EGYPTIAN ISSUES

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH USINTOFF JAN 22, TASS DEPUTY DIRECTOR YEDRASHNIKOV FOCUSED QUESTIONS ON POST-DISENGAGEMENT PROCESS AND EGYPTIAN/US ECONOMIC RELATIONS. WITH SPECIFIC REGARD TO SECRETARY'S VISIT TO ME, YEDRASHNIKOV COMMENTED THAT EGYPTIANS SEEMED TO HAVE GOTTEN THE WORST PART OF THE ARRANGEMENT. HE SAID THAT MOST OF THE CONCESSIONS APPEAR TO BE ON SADAT'S PART, AND MIGHT LEAD TO SITUATION WHEREBY, FOLLOWING DISENGAGEMENT, ISRAELIS WOULD BE IN BETTER POSITION THAN BEFORE. YEDRASHNIKOV ASKED WHAT ARRANGEMENTS EXISTED FOR AN ONGOING POLITICAL PROCESS, AND WHY SADAT GAVE IN SO EASILY.

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2. REGARDING EGYPTIAN ECONOMIC POLICIES, YEDRASHNIKOV

NOTED THAT THIS WAS A SUBJECT OF SOME INTEREST IN MOSCOW: IN FACT, HE HAD BEEN ASKED TO WRITE A PAPER ON THE SUBJECT. HE ASKED IF USINTOFF COULD HELP FILL IN SOME OF THE DETAILS OF EGYPTIAN/WESTERN AND PARTICULARLY EGYPTIAN/US ECONOMIC ARRANGEMENTS. HE EXPRESSED PARTICULAR INTEREST IN BECHTEL'S CONTRACT WITH SUMED, FORTHCOMING VISIT OF CHASE BANK CHAIRMAN ROCKEFELLER, AND VISITS BY (UNSPECIFIED) "OTHER GROUPS" TO EGYPT. THESE, HE SAID, INDICATED A HIGHER US INTEREST IN STRONGER ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH EGYPT. YEDRASHNIKOV CONTINUED THAT IT WAS HIS "PERSONAL VIEW" THAT "POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS FLOW FROM ECONOMIC EVENTS", AND ASKED WHAT ECONOMIC ARRANGEMENTS WERE AGREED ON IN ASWAN WHICH MIGHT HAVE LED SADAT TO ACCEPT CURRENT DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT. WAS THE US CONTEMPLATING ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO EGYPT? (CHAIRMAN OF BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE OF PEOPLES ASSEMBLY, AHMAD ABOU ISMAIL, COMMENTED TO AMBASSADOR LAST NIGHT THAT "PRAVDA REPRESENTATIVE IN CAIRO" (POSSIBLY YEDRASHNIKOV) HAD SOUGHT HIM OUT TO ASK ABOUT ALLEGED EGYPTIAN PLANS TO IMPROVE ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH WEST IN GENERAL AND US IN PARTICULAR. ACCORDING ISMAIL, SOVIET OFFICER HAD APPEARED MUCH CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBILITY SUCH DEVELOPMENT. ISMAIL CLAIMED HE GAVE NON-COMMITAL REPLY.)

3. IN REPLY TO QUESTION BY USINTOFF, YEDRASHNIKOV SAID THAT MOSCOW CONTINUED TO EXPRESS CONCERN OVER DRIFT OF EGYPTIAN POLICIES. HE NOTED THAT SOVIET UNION HAD FOR YEARS HOPED TO IMPROVE EGYPTIAN UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION FOR SOCIALISM, AND HAD GONE VERY FAR TOWARD ASSISTING EGYPT IN THE HOPE THAT SHE MIGHT BECOME A MORE "PROGRESSIVE" COUNTRY POLITICALLY AND SOCIALLY. HE SAID THAT THIS GOAL HAD NOT BEEN ACHIEVED. CURRENTLY THERE WAS SOME SOVIET DISAPPOINTMENT ABOUT EGYPT'S RESISTANCE TO SOCIALIST DOCTRINE, AND A ABOUT THE PRESENT PRO-WESTERN AND BOURGEOIS TURN IN BOTH EGYPTIAN FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLICIES.

4. YEDRASHNIKOV ALSO ASKED IF AS A RESULT OF THE DISCUSSIONS IN ASWAN, AND THE SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF THE DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT, THE US AND EGYPT WERE CONTEMPLATING AN EARLY RESUMPTION OF FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. HE
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ADDED THAT SUCH WOULD BE NATURAL UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

5. REGARDING SOVIET/EGYPTIAN RELATIONS, YEDRASHNIKOV NOTED THAT AMBASSADOR VINOGRADOV REMAINED ACCREDITED TO EGYPT AND SAID THAT NO REPLACEMENT HAD BEEN OFFICIALLY PROPOSED. HE SUGGESTED THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT VINOGRADOV MIGHT REMAIN AMBASSADOR, IN VIEW OF EARLIER DIFFICULTIES SURROUNDING THE QUESTION OF APPOINTING A SUCCESSOR; BUT

HE ADDED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER FAHMY'S DISCUSSIONS IN
MOSCOW WOULD PROBABLY INCLUDE THIS SUBJECT.
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